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NEW DELHI, August 18 (Compass Direct News) – Ahead of one-year remembrances of massive anti-Christian violence in the eastern state of Orissa, the **U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)** has put India on its “Watch List” for the country’s violations of religious freedom, evoking strong reactions from the Indian government.

**USCIRF Chairman Leonard Leo said** in a statement on Wednesday (Aug. 12) that it was “extremely disappointing” that India “has done so little to protect and bring justice to its religious minorities under siege.”

The U.S. panel’s decision was “regrettable,” a spokesperson for India’s Ministry of External Affairs, Vishnu Prakash, said in a statement on Thursday (Aug. 13), after the **USCIRF** put India on the list due to a “disturbing increase” in violence on minorities and a growing culture of impunity in the country.